

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN JO 02284 201951Z
ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 FEA-01 AGRE-00 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05
L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 EPG-02 AID-05
SS-15 STR-04 ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02
OMB-01 OIC-02 /084 W
-----210703Z 109096 /13

R 201916Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7459
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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GUATEMALA ALSO FOR ROCAP

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, CS
SUBJECT: RESTRICTION OF COFFEE SALES

REF: SAN JOSE 2283

1. EMBOFF DISCUSSED COFFEE SALES WITH ARNOLDO LOPEZ
ECHANDI, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF
COFFEE PROCESSORS. THE MEMBERS OF THIS CHAMBER ARE
THE ACTUAL EXPORTERS OF COFFEE FROM COSTA RICA.

2. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM LOPEZ CONFIRMS THE PICTURE
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REPORTED REFTEL, I.E. THAT NO ORGANIZED ACTION IS BEING
TAKEN TO RESTRICT EXPORTS OF COFFEE FROM COSTA RICA.

3. LOPEZ SAID THAT SALES HAVE BEEN SLOW FOR THE PAST
SEVERAL WEEKS BECAUSE OF MARKET CONDITIONS. THERE HAS
BEEN A TREMENDOUS GAP BETWEEN WHAT THE MILLERS WERE
ASKING FOR THEIR RUFFEE (\$300) AND WHAT THE MARKET WAS

WILLING TO PAY (\$250 TO \$260). UNDER CONDITIONS OF PRICES LOWER THAN THOSE THAT SELLERS HAD BECOME USED TO AND WITH EXPECTATIONS THAT PRICES WOULD RISE AGAIN, EMPHASIZED THAT NO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN IN COSTA RICA BY THE GOVERNMENT OR BY ANY GROUP OF COFFEE PRODUCERS OR MILLERS TO WITHHOLD COFFEE FROM THE MARKET. HE SAID THAT SALES HAVE BEEN INCREASING AGAIN SINCE MONDAY WITH THE RISING PRICES.

4. EMBOFF HAS LEARNED FROM A LOCAL COFFEE EXPORTER THAT THE DIRECTOR OF COSTA RICA'S COFFEE OFFICE, ALVARO JIMENEZ, IS IN MEXICO ATTENDING A SPECIAL, UNPUBLICIZED MEETING MADE UP OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES, COLOMBIA, BRAZIL AND MEXICO. SOURCE SAID THE MEETING WAS CALLED AT THE REQUEST OF THE HEAD OF MEXICO'S COFFEE INSTITUTE WHO IS SEEKING TO FORM A GROUP THAT WOULD UNITE IN A COMMON FRONT WHEN INTERNATIONAL PRICES FALL. SOURCE SAID THAT IN REALITY, THE MEETING IS JUST A PLOY TO GIVE AN APPEARANCE OF UNITY AMONG EXPORTERS, AND THAT NOTHING TANGIBLE CAN BE EXPECTED TO RESULT.

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